DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 145 431 CS 203 643

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TITLE Communication Skills Survey.
PUB DATE Feb 77
NOTE 31p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the California Association of Teachers of English (19th, Los Angeles, California, February 18-20, 1977) ; Some pages may not reproduce clearly because of the paper color

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Assignments; *Communication Skills; Educational Research; *Employment Qualifications; *English Instruction; *Job Skills; Secondary Education; *Speech Communication; Surveys

ABSTRACT

In order to determine the oral and written communication skills most valued by people in a wide variety of jobs, job-related activities related to those skills, and consequences of poor communication, a two-page questionnaire was designed and distributed. Results from the 196 returned questionnaires (38 percent) were summarized for seven job classifications. Findings indicated that teachers, students, and employers valued the more abstract communication skills, rather than mechanic skills. Training in the analysis and evaluation of information was the most valued skill. (A set of 25 job-related classroom assignments is included in the report.) (AA)

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS SURVEY

by

Carol Huebner and Gayle Jasso

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PURPOSE

The objectives of this survey were to determine: (1) oral and written communication skills most valued by people in a wide variety of jobs; (2) job-related activities utilizing those skills; and (3) consequences of poor communication.

The results of the survey would help teachers focus on the most relevant communication skills, design assignments

CS203643

based upon actual job-related activities, and give students concrete examples of why good communication skills are valuable. The survey results would enable employers to train employees more effectively and avoid the consequences of poor communication.

FORMAT

In order to obtain the desired information, a three-part, two-page survey was prepared. It asked for the respondent's title, department, and type of organization. No names were requested.

The survey required approximately 15 minutes to complete because two of the three sections called for written responses. It was believed that for the purpose of this survey written answers rather than checked items would provide the most valuable information.

Accompanying the survey was a cover letter explaining the survey's purpose. The letter was printed on orange paper so that it would be less likely to be misplaced or forgotten on a desk. In addition, a postage aid return envelope was included in the survey packet.

DISTRIBUTION

519 surveys were distributed to a variety of public and private organizations primarily in the Southern California area.

The chief method of distribution was through personal contacts who represented different types of organizations or careers. Many contacts agreed to distribute surveys to co-workers and friends.

Beyond the initial selection of contacts, there was no control over how the surveys were distributed. Therefore, the responses were not intended to constitute a completely representative sample of workers.

RESPONSES

196 people (38 percent) returned surveys. The respondents represented such businesses and organizations as: accounting, advertising, community service, data processing, educational, engineering, financial, legal, manufacturing, medical, public utility, real estate, retail sales, and state and local government. The majority of responses were from large organizations.

Surveys were sorted into seven job classifications according to each respondent's title.

Job Classification	Examples of Job Titles	Surveys Returned	Percent of Total
Professional	attorney physician CPA	44	22
Creative	feature writer actor graphic designer	5	2
Managerial/ Administrative	corporate executive department manager superintendent	78	41
Clerical	bookkeeper receptionist secretary	38	19
Technical	optician radio installer mechanic	12	6
Sales/Marketing	buyer sales representative realtor	8	4
Analytical/ Research	financial analyst systems analyst criminal investigator	11	6

RESULTS

Section I of Survey

Respondents were given a list of nine communication skills and asked to select three skills most important in performing their jobs.

(Note: Neither listening nor nonverbal methods of communication, such as facial expressions and gestures, was included.)

Table No. Ia

Oral and/or Written Communication Skills

(Respondents selected three most important skills.)

Oral and/or Written Communication Skills (in ranking order) / Job Classifications	Professional	Creative	Administrative/ Managerial	Clerical	Technical	Sales/ Marketing	Analytical/ Research	Total Responses (597) All Job Classifications
(Percent of Responses)	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Analysis & Evaluation of Information	27	19	28	17	23	26	28	25
Organizing & Developing Ideas	21	25	28	12	14	19	25	21
Accurate Recording & Retention of Fact	16	13	19	24	17	23	25	19
Appropriate Vocabulary	7	6	7	5	11	8	3	7
Correct Grammar	7	6	3	12	11	4	3	7
Appropriate Tone	4	13	6	10	5	0	5	6
Phrasing Questions	6	12	3	7	11	4	5	5
Punctuation, Capitalization, & Spelling	2	0	2	12	5	8	3	5
Research & Library Techniques	7	0	2	0	0	4	3	3
Other	3	6	2	1	3	4	0	2

Observations - Table No. Ia

1. A combination of three skills was valued most by workers in every job classification:
   a. Analysis and evaluation of information
   b. Organizing and developing ideas
   c. Accurate recording and retention of fact

   Professional, administrative/managerial, technical, sales/marketing, and analytical/research workers valued no other skills as highly as the above three.
2. Clerical and technical workers valued a wider range of skills than did the other classifications of workers.
3. Only clerical workers highly valued "punctuation, capitalization, and spelling" and "correct grammar."

Of the three skills they selected, respondents were asked to circle the letter of the skill they valued most.

Table Ib

Oral and/or Written Communication Skills

(Respondents selected the most important skill.)

Job Classifications / Oral and/or Written Communication Skills (in ranking order)	Professional	Creative	Administrative/ Managerial	Clerical	Technical	Sales/ Marketing	Analytical/ Research	Total Responses (185) All Job Classifications
(Percent of Responses)	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Analysis & Evaluation of Information	31	50	36	16	42	50	27	32
Organizing & Developing Ideas	38	25	45	5	8	12.5	55	32
Accurate Recording & Retention of Fact	8	0	11	46	8	12.5	9	17
Appropriate Tone	8	25	3	14	8	0	0	6
Correct Grammar	4	0	1	11	17	0	0	5
Punctuation, Capitalization & Spelling	3	0	0	8	17	12.5	0	4
Appropriate Vocabulary	0	0	3	0	0	12.5	0	1.5
Phrasing Questions	0	0	1	0	0	0	9	1
Research & Library Techniques	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Other	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	.5

Section II of Survey

Respondents were asked to list their job-related activities which utilize any or all of the skills they selected.

All of their responses were grouped into 25 generalized activities. (The number 25 is coincidental.)

Table No. II

Job-Related Activities

1. Clarifying needs, problems, and intentions
2. Analyzing information for pertinent content
3. Interviewing
4. Devising strategies and plans
5. Setting goals
6. Establishing procedures and standards
7. Interpreting and explaining
8. Translating into layman's terms
9. Justifying a position
10. Preparing written material
11. Giving and following directions
12. Preparing budgets
13. Giving oral presentations
14. Responding to questions
15. Recruiting
16. Training
17. Leading meetings
18. Setting up schedules and itineraries
19. Establishing technical specifications
20. Taking minutes, notes, and messages
21. Giving and taking dictation
22. Recordkeeping
23. Editing
24. Filling out forms
25. Alphabetizing and indexing

Section III of Survey

Respondents were given a list of possible consequences of weak communication skills and asked to check those which, to their knowledge, had occurred in their organization.

Table No. III-a

Consequences of Weak Communication Skills

Job Classifications / Consequences of Weak Communication Skills	Professional	Creative	Administrative/ Managerial	Clerical	Technical	Sales/ Marketing	Analytical/ Research
(Percent of Responses)	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Loss of employee or company money	4	12	8	7	11	12	15
Termination of employee	7	0	7	12	5	3	0
Customer complaint	12	23	14	15	17	16	11
Interruption of service	9	0	8	5	5	3	0
Illness or injury	3	0	2	0	1	0	4
Lawsuit	5	6	3	0	6	16	7
Duplication of effort	20	23	18	18	19	19	26
Loss of client or customer	8	12	7	7	9	19	11
Decline in employee morale	15	12	16	17	11	6	19
Property damage	1	0	1	0	2	0	0
Conflict between employees	16	12	16	19	14	6	7

Observations - Table No. IIIa

1. Four consequences of weak communication skills were picked most frequently by workers in every job classification except sales/marketing and analytical/research:
   a. Duplication of effort
   b. Conflict between employees
   c. Decline in employee morale
   d. Customer complaint
2. Professional, administrative/managerial, and technical workers indicated a wider range of consequences of weak communication skills than did the other classifications of workers.
3. Creative workers indicated a narrower range of consequences of weak communication skills than did the other classifications of workers.
4. Only sales/marketing workers indicated a high incidence of lawsuits as a result of weak communication skills.

Table No. III-b

Consequences of Weak Communication Skills

Percent of Total Responses	Consequences in Ranking Order	Respondents' Elaborations
19	1. Duplication of effort	Several departments concentrated on hiring the same individual, each without the knowledge of the others. They also surveyed for the same information.
15	2. Conflict between employees	Petty differences cause much conflict among the clerical staff in this office. Half the time people don't speak to each other.
15	3. Decline in employee morale	Employees were not notified in advance of the reasons for a policy change. This led to very negative reactions at the time of implementation.
14	4. Customer complaint	Failure of police to communicate in layman's terms results in poor community feedback.
8	5. Loss of client or customer	Because a customer wasn't properly greeted, informed, or counseled, he felt his business wasn't needed and left.
8	6. Loss of employee or company money	Poor spelling in press releases casts a bad reflection on City Hall and might result in a loss of funding for certain projects.
7	7. Termination of employee	An analyst was trying to solve a problem unilaterally and was fired because he hadn't informed top management of what he was working on.
7	8. Interruption of service	If adequate information is not included on a patient's progress report, an insurance company may discontinue payments for medical treatment.
4	9. Lawsuit	A strike and court actions might have been prevented if teachers and administrators had known what each was contributing to the district.

Table No. III-b
Continued

Percent of Total Responses	Consequences in Ranking Order	Respondents' Elaborations
2	10. Illness or injury	A pharmacist must be careful in writing directions for taking medication.
1	11. Property damage	I must explain the proper placement and operation of equipment or the customer might damage the equipment.

CONCLUSIONS

The original expectation was that most respondents would value mechanical skills, thus justifying the large amount of time many English teachers spend on spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar.

However, the survey results demonstrate to teachers, students, and employers that it is the more abstract communication skills rather than the mechanics of English which most workers find valuable in performing their jobs. Training in the analysis and evaluation of information, the most valued skill, is essential since workers in all seven job classifications are asked to think critically and form reasoned judgments.

In addition, there is justification for continued emphasis on writing (which may utilize all nine communication skills), since the ability to prepare written material quickly and accurately is increasingly important to the

functioning of organizations. As one respondent noted, "Large organizations run on paper. Unless it's written down, it never happened."

In order to increase the relevance of writing skills, arbitrary composition topics and textbook drills could be replaced by assignments based upon the "Job-Related Activities" listed by respondents, offering students or trainees an opportunity to simulate "on-the-job" situations. Knowledge of these situations would also help to expand awareness of the vast number of activities which require communication skills.

Many respondents added closing statements emphasizing that the success of both an individual and an organization depends upon good communication. Management complained that employees do not understand management's goals; employees complained that they are never informed of management's programs. Workers in all classifications were concerned about low morale, employee conflict, and the wasted time which results from duplication of effort. Apparently, two-way communication is vital not only to the personal satisfaction of workers but also to the effectiveness of their organizations.

JOB-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Note: Respondents were asked to list their job-related activities which utilize any or all of the communication skills they selected. From their responses, we compiled the following list of twenty-five generalized activities.

1. Clarifying needs, problems, and intentions
2. Analyzing information for pertinent content
3. Interviewing
4. Devising strategies and plans
5. Setting goals
6. Establishing procedures and standards
7. Interpreting and explaining
8. Translating into layman's terms
9. Justifying a position
10. Preparing written material
11. Giving and following directions
12. Preparing budgets
13. Giving oral presentations
14. Responding to questions
15. Recruiting
16. Training
17. Leading meetings
18. Setting up schedules and itineraries
19. Establishing technical specifications
20. Taking minutes, notes and messages
21. Giving and taking dictation
22. Recordkeeping
23. Editing
24. Filling out forms
25. Alphabetizing and indexing

We hope that the above list assists you in creating classroom assignments which simulate actual on-the-job activities.

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CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS
BASED UPON JOB-RELATED ACTIVITIES

1. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: CLARIFYING NEEDS, PROBLEMS AND INTENTIONS

   Suggested Background Lesson: objectivity, subjectivity; people's need to know about things which concern them; overview of organization functions, such as goals, resources, operations, results

   Assignment: Students are to consider themselves "administrators" of a large high school. The administration has decided to find out what students think they need to know about the functioning of their school. Individually or in small groups, the students make a list of 20 specific issues and topics which concern the school. (Examples: the way it's run, teaching methods, grading systems, finances, curriculum, graduation requirements, counseling, etc.) Each issue or topic should be written on a 3x5 card. Acting now as "students," each individual or group should sort the 20 cards into the following 4 categories:

   a. "I am most interested in getting more information about _____"
   b. "I am interested in getting more information about _____"
   c. "I am not interested in getting more information about _____"
   d. "I have no interest at all in the following subjects"

   Students should then discuss or debate their groupings orally or in a written composition.

   Variation: Students are to consider themselves "management" in a large manufacturing company. They make 20 cards for topics which they feel employees might need to know more about.

2. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: ANALYZING INFORMATION FOR PERTINENT CONTENT

   Suggested Background Lesson: chart reading; objectivity; use and importance of polls and surveys

   Assignment: Divide the class into groups. Give each group a ditto of a simple statistical chart of survey results. Give them only the figures, not the conclusions drawn by the pollster. (Examples of surveys: The Virginia Slims American Women's Poll; Harris, Field and Gallup polls, etc.) Each group analyzes the chart and writes a

list of at least 3 conclusions based upon the figures. Each group then exchanges its chart and list of conclusions with another group and judges the validity of the other group's conclusions. After these papers have been returned, hand out copies of the original conclusions which appeared when the survey was published. Encourage each group to critique and evaluate its own work before handing in its result to you.

Variation: Give each group a chart plus several conclusions, some of which are deliberately inaccurate. Each group should attempt to defend or disprove each conclusion by reference to the figures in the chart.

3. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: INTERVIEWING

Suggested Background Lesson: proper telephone "etiquette"; dialogue format of a script; how to sell oneself in an interview; how to ask pertinent questions; how to refuse to answer certain questions

Assignment: Working individually, students find a classified ad describing a job which appeals to them, and they imagine calling the employer who placed the ad. Using script form, they write the conversation which might take place. Their goal is to show both the applicant and the employer asking probing questions and giving succinct explanations. The interview should include at least 1 question which the applicant refuses to answer. The final lines of the script must indicate whether the employer decides to invite the applicant for a personal interview and whether the applicant accepts.

Variation: The interview could be done orally in pairs with the class critiquing how effectively the student presented qualifications and interests, and how well the employer elicited information and responded to questions about the nature of the job.

4. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: DEVISING STRATEGIES AND PLANS

Suggested Background Lesson: explanation of office in-box; value of setting priorities

Assignment: Prepare a box or large envelope which contains letters and memos, each of which presents a problem or asks for advice. (Examples: appointment requests; various telephone messages; personnel conflict; need for additional supplies; need for temporary office help, etc.) Individually or in groups, students read through the materials and answer the following questions:

a. In what order would you handle these matters? (List by title which appears on top of each item.)
b. Justify your choice of the item you would handle first.
c. Which matters seem to require more information before you can act on them? (List by title.) Next to these items, briefly explain what information you need and who might be able to give it to you.

5. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: SETTING GOALS

Suggested Background Lesson: definition of short-range and long-range goals, operational and general goals; value of setting priorities

Assignment: Divide the class into groups. Give each group a list of a hypothetical company's general goals. Have each group arrange the goals in order of importance; that is, which goals should be achieved first in order to begin work on the second, etc. Then each group establishes the operational goals which would achieve the general goals. (Example: general goals of a photography studio: 1. to double profits in 5 years; 2. to become the sole commercial photographer for the local paper within 3 years. The operational goals might include: 1. investing in new studio and lab equipment; 2. doubling the staff; 3. increasing the advertising budget, etc.) Group results are presented orally, with each group defending the order of their goals.

Variation: Give each group a card stating a community or societal problem. Have each group compose a general goal which, if achieved, would eliminate or greatly reduce the problem. The group then lists the operational goals or procedures which would help to attain the general goal. (Example: School Vandalism-- general goal: to eliminate all school vandalism within 3 years. The operational goals might include: 1. to build 5 new youth centers; 2. to double the night security staff; 3. to offer a law enforcement course at every high school and junior high school in the district, etc.)

Variation: Give each group a list of a hypothetical company's general and operational goals. Have the group eliminate incompatible or unrealistic goals and arrange the lists in order of priority.

6. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES AND STANDARDS

Suggested Background Lesson: value clarification games; defending a decision

Assignment: Prepare a box which contains slips of paper which each describe conflicts between employees or situations calling for a personal ethical decision. (Example: an employee has another job offer with a friendlier firm but at a lower salary; a secretary is afraid that her boss is considering replacing her with a younger woman, etc.) Acting as a Personnel Manager, a student writes a composition which answers the following questions:

a. Briefly summarize the situation.
b. What would you do or advise?
c. Why?
d. What are the possible consequences of your action or advice?

7. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: INTERPRETING AND EXPLAINING

Suggested Background Lesson: objectivity; importance of clarity

Assignment: Give each student a list of company or school policies; that is, rules and procedures which personnel and clients must follow. After selecting one policy, each student writes a composition which includes the following:

a. a statement of the policy
b. a re-statement of the policy in their own words
c. at least 2 reasons for the policy
d. consequences of not following the policy

The student is not to include any personal opinion of the policy, whether positive or negative.

8. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: TRANSLATING INTO LAYMAN'S TERMS

Suggested Background Lesson: jargon or commercialese vs. "standard" English; specialized vocabulary

Assignment: Give each student a paragraph from an insurance policy, will, contract, etc., as well as corresponding dictionaries of terms. (These are available from libraries.) Students construct a vocabulary and definition list of all unfamiliar terms in the paragraph. They then rewrite the paragraph in language a sixth grade child could understand.

9. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: JUSTIFYING A POSITION

Suggested Background Lesson: techniques of persuasion; importance of clarity

Assignment: Give each student a list of typical business decisions. (Examples: termination of an employee, expansion of company, temporary lay-off of newest employees, increase of salary for certain level of employees, re-assignment of employee to another city, etc.) Each student selects one of the decisions and writes a composition defending the decision. The composition must answer the following:

a. What is the decision you are defending?
b. Who is attacking this decision?
c. What are their reasons for attacking the decision?
d. What are your rebuttals?
e. What are the consequences of following their advice?
f. What are the consequences of following your advice?

Variation: This could be handled orally with opposing arguments being presented in debate or courtroom fashion and the rest of the class acting as a Board of Directors or outside arbitrator.

10. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: PREPARING WRITTEN MATERIAL

Suggested Background Lesson: purpose and importance of memos; importance of clarity and brevity; appropriate tone

Assignment: Give each student a dittoed sheet resembling a typical memo. Provide the students with a job title, memo recipient and problem. (Example: From-- Personnel Manager; To-- Bob Allen, Executive Assistant; Re-- Absenteeism) Students draft a memo on this topic and the memo must:

a. state the problem precisely
b. request specific action or advice

In order to demonstrate brevity, the memo must be only one side of the sheet.

11. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: GIVING AND FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

Suggested Background Lesson: step-by-step organization; giving explicit directions

Assignment: An object is left with a teacher on campus by one student, who then writes a careful description of the object and directions from the English classroom to the hiding place. No specific names of people or buildings can be used. A second student, using the written directions, finds the object and returns to class with the signature of the participating teacher before the bell rings. Students might compete for the shortest amount of time.

12. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: PREPARING BUDGETS

Suggested Background Lesson: need and use of budget; distinction between "need" and "desire" for item

Assignment: Students list 10 material things which they desire, explain why they want them and estimate their cost. Those items which they feel are necessities should be circled. Of the circled necessities, students should check those which they will have to purchase themselves. At this time students should research the actual cost of all 10 items. Using these figures and their average monthly incomes (through allowances, jobs, etc.), they construct a budget. The budget will itemize money put toward the necessities and money set aside for the other items they desire. Items which will be paid for by someone else should be noted.

13. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: GIVING ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Suggested Background Lesson: techniques of public speaking; diction; outlining

Assignment: Divide the class into groups. Each group, acting as a partnership, must invent a product or provide a service and seek either customers or financial backing. In oral presentation, each group should be prepared to make its "pitch" by enthusiastically presenting the following information:

a. a description of the product or service
b. what the product or service can do for the customer
c. how much it costs and why
d. long-range goals of the company
e. why a customer or investor should choose that company

After each group makes its "pitch," the class can evaluate the presentation, and when all presentations are finished, you can tell the class which company you would have selected.

14. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS

Suggested Background Lesson: active listening; analyzing questions and preparing answers; how to elaborate on a generalization

Assignment: Arrange with a community personnel manager or experienced job counselor to conduct mock interviews in your class, and have them assist you in writing a set of sample questions which might be asked in the interviews. Give students a copy of the sample questions and let them practice answers. Students should consider the intent of the question, what information to include and what to omit from an answer, and how they might make the best impression on an interviewer. The actual interviews could be taped for future analysis.

15. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: RECRUITING

Suggested Background Lesson: techniques of persuasion and "selling"; anticipating questions and needs

Assignment: Each student makes a recruitment brochure for a job they would like someone to do for them at the present time and with the financial resources actually available. (Examples: back scratcher, gardener, cook, etc.) The brochure should include the following:

a. magazine pictures which sell the job and make it appealing
b. a slogan to "hook" the person they're looking for and arranged artistically with the pictures
c. explanation of what the job involves, the skills needed, the hours, the benefits, the form of remuneration

The goal of the brochure is to persuade someone to come to work for the student.

16. JOB- RELATED ACTIVITY: TRAINING

Suggested Background Lesson: clarity; use of examples; organization

Assignment: Each student teaches a skill they are adept in to another student in the class. The skill should be elemental and simple. (Examples: using a slide rule or pocket calculator, understanding classified ad abbreviations, changing a typewriter ribbon, etc.) In preparation, the students should make a list of all supplies needed to perform the skill and the tips and shortcuts they have learned from experience. Then the students pair off, teaching each other the skill, illustrating how to do it whenever necessary. Each student watches the other, reviewing, correcting and adjusting performance whenever necessary.

17. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: LEADING MEETINGS

Suggested Background Lesson: purpose of an agenda; how to ask questions

Assignment: Divide the class into groups. Each group is to ask a community member to be a guest speaker in the class. Students should provide the guest with some guidelines and a time limit and find out if the guest needs any materials. Each group interviews their guest in advance in order to prepare a brief biographical sketch and general introduction of the speaker. They also structure a series of questions which may be asked after the speech. On the day of the presentation, each group is responsible for the following:

a. introduction of the guest
b. a brief summary of the guest's qualifications
c. leading the class in a question-answer period
d. thanking the guest

18. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: SETTING UP SCHEDULES AND ITINERARIES

Suggested Background Lesson: explanation of airline flight schedules and hotel accomodation books

Assignment: Using the airline and hotel books, students are to plan a 1 week vacation traveling anywhere in the world and returning home on the seventh day. The itinerary must include stops in at least 5 cities. Supply each student with a form on which to record the following information:

a. Date, time, city, flight number of departure
b. Arrival time
c. Class of service
d. Name of hotel, phone number, type of accomodation

Students should accompany their itinerary with a composition explaining their choices.

19. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: ESTABLISHING TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Suggested Background Lesson: definition of "specifications"; writing business letters

Assignment: Prepare several sets of 6 pictures, each set showing a different type of item. (Examples: 6 cars, 6 dresses, 6 houses, etc.) All pictures within a set must differ noticeably from each other. Give each set a letter and then give 1 picture to each student. Students are now "in the market" for the item in the picture, and they order it by writing a business letter which must include a detailed description of the item. They must specify exactly what they want. Then divide the students into groups, putting each student into a group which is assigned a set of pictures different from the pictures they each wrote about. Give each group all of the letters written about their set, and have the students try to match the specifications of each letter with its picture. Students may rewrite their letters to get a perfect "match."

20. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: TAKING MINUTES, NOTES AND MESSAGES

Suggested Background Lesson: techniques of good listening; notetaking; following directions

Assignment: Provide students with sample message pads. Read aloud to the class a series of telephone messages as though you are a caller and the students are receptionists or workers sitting at at the desk of the person you are trying to reach. The message you leave and which they copy should include the following:

a. who you are and the organization you represent
b. who you want to speak to
c. your telephone number
d. whether you want the call returned and when
e. a brief statement of your reason for calling

Students should note the date and time and sign each message. After dictating several messages, re-read them and have students check the accuracy of their papers.

21. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: GIVING AND TAKING DICTATION

Suggested Background Lesson: selling oneself at an interview; techniques of good listening; notetaking

Assignment: Divide the class into groups of 4. One student is the interviewer, 1 the applicant, 1 the secretary and 1 the employer. The group decides on the nature of the job being applied for and then the employer leaves the room. The interviewer conducts an interview of the applicant, seeking pertinent information about background, work experience and career goals. The the interviewer dictates from memory and at normal speed a synopsis of the interview to the secretary. The applicant cannot correct or change

information but must remain silent. The employer is then summoned and she/he reads the secretary's notes or has them read aloud and decides whether to hire the applicant, based upon the amount and quality of information contained in the notes. At this time the applicant may challenge incorrect or inadequate statements, and the group should attempt to determine where communication faltered.

22. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: RECORDKEEPING

Suggested Background Lesson: setting goals; use of forms designed to record information

Assignment: Students select some personal problem they would like to solve. (Examples: food, money, time, study habits, family conflicts, etc.) Give each student 5 daily record forms which break each day into quarter hour segments. Students record all activities throughout the day, and circle those items which relate to the problem they are working on. At the end of the week, help each student see areas or times of weakness.

23. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: EDITING

Suggested Background Lesson: proofreading

Assignment: Give each student 2 copies of the same business letter. One copy should be perfect, the other should contains omissions of words or errors in spelling, punctuation and spacing. Students should compare the 2 letters and correct all deviations in the second copy. If they total the number of deviations in each line, this will speed your correcting.

Variation: Have students copy a business letter which you provide. Warn them that more than 3 deviations from your copy might mean possible termination if they were employed.

24. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: FILLING OUT FORMS

Suggested Background Lesson: accuracy and completeness; neatness; personnel file

Assignment: Obtain employment applications from the classified personnel office of your school district and from local companies and banks. Laminate and post a model. Keep boxes of forms in the classroom, and after students have completed a form, ask a counselor or other staff person to conduct a mock interview using only the information which appears on the forms.

25. JOB-RELATED ACTIVITY: ALPHABETIZING AND INDEXING

Suggested Background Lesson: alphabetical order; tables of organization; headings and sub-headings

Assignment: Give students a list of school district administrative personnel. Students should arrange the list in alphabetical order by groups of people of like title and rank. (Examples: Superintendant, Assistant Superintendants, Directors, etc.)

Variation: Give students a list of personnel within 1 or 2 district departments. (Examples: Curriculum, Pupil Services, etc.) Have them alphabetize the staff names after grouping the staff by titles below each department heading. Students can check their work by referring to the district's Table of Organization.

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SAMPLE

The following is a sample of how one Classroom Assignment Based Upon Job-Related Activities was used within a traditional thematic literature unit.

Unit Title: Viewpoints

Unit Selections: short stories and poems from Perspectives, pp. 88-122
poems from 100 Plus American Poems and The Charge of the Light Brigade and Other Story Poems

Unit Structure: oral reading of selections
class discussion of selections
instruction on short story or poetic concepts
worksheets on vocabulary from selections
instruction and worksheets on writing clear short answers
exercises on reading techniques demonstrated in selections
instruction and practice in writing dramatic monologues
instruction and practice in writing argumentative composition

Unit Purpose: to expose students to different viewpoints on certain subjects such as amnesty, death, gang violence, success, friendship
to give students practice in stating their own views on certain subjects and in stating the views of others

Use of Assignment #13: read textbook selection on persuasive language and logical fallacies
discuss tv and magazine ads from the consumer's viewpoint
introduce business and marketing viewpoint
hand out Advertising Assignment (see attached) and discuss
work in small groups for two days
oral presentation by spokespersons of each group
oral evaluation of assignment

ADVERTISING ASSIGNMENT (small groups)

Purposes: 1. to familiarize you with techniques of persuasion used in advertising
2. to familiarize you with certain marketing concepts
3. to offer an opportunity for structured public speaking

Assignment: FOLLOW THESE STEPS

1. Your group is a partnership. You have teamed up to create and market a product or service. You need to attract additional financial backing in order to go into production. Decide what product or service you want to create.

2. Give your company a name.

3. Select a spoksperson who will orally give your "sales pitch" to a group of potential backers. This person will need to take notes.

4. Describe your product or service. Use some of the techniques discussed in class, such as:
   a. tone of confidential sincerity
   b. irrelevant or confusing or inconclusive evidence
   c. information on what the product or service will do for the consumer
   d. words with positive connotations

5. Decide how much money you need from the backers and defend this amount.

6. Give a reassuring description of the members of your company. Include some details about the partners' backgrounds.

7. State the long-range goals of your company-- what do you hope to achieve after 10 years of marketing your product or service?

8. Decide why an investor should choose your company rather than some other venture.

9. Organize the information from steps 4-8 into a convincing "sales pitch" and rehearse this with your spokesperson.

CAREER ENGLISH UNIT

I. Getting a Job

1. Select a career and prepare a vocabulary list.
2. Complete two worksheets on classified ads.
3. Prepare one classified ad worksheet.
4. Write a letter of application and envelope.
5. Complete a worksheet on editing.
6. Write the script of a telephone interview.
7. Complete two worksheets on application forms.
8. Complete one sample application form.
9. Participate in mock interviews.

II. On the Job

10. Complete one worksheet on giving and taking telephone messages.
11. Complete one worksheet on using the yellow pages
12. Write one memo.
13. Write one monologue justifying a position.

Extra-Credit Options

1. Complete gold Career Sheet in the Career Center.
2. Complete the telephone white pages worksheet.
3. Complete a recruitment brochure.
4. Complete a chart analysis worksheet.

DIRECTIONS FOR EACH STEP

I. Getting a Job

1. Select a career and prepare a vocabulary list.
   a. You may have many career interests, but choose one which would have a fairly specialized vocabulary.
   b. If possible, interview someone in this career to learn more specific terms. Write his/her name and title on the bottom of your list.
   c. List at least 25 terms which a person in this career field would need to understand and use. Next to each term write a brief meaning.
   d. Put a proper heading on your paper and hand in on the due date.

2. Complete two worksheets on classified ads.
   These will be distributed and corrected in class.

3. Prepare one classified ad worksheet.
   a. From a newspaper cut out an ad for a job in which you are interested.
   b. Paste it on a sheet of paper below the proper heading.
   c. Below the ad write a "translation" of it, using no abbreviations and filling in omitted words. Keep approximately the same word order as the original.
   d. Hand in on the due date.

4. Write a letter of application and envelope.
   a. Read and listen carefully to instructions about business letters.
   b. Study the sample letter and complete the attached worksheet in class.
   c. Write a business letter applying for the job described in your classified ad from Step 3.
   d. Fold your letter in thirds.
   e. Study the sample envelope and then prepare an envelope on the top flap of your letter.
   f. Re-write the letter and envelope until you receive credit.

5. Complete a worksheet on editing.
   This will be distributed and corrected in class.

6. Write the script of a telephone interview.
   a. Listen carefully to the explanation of telephone interviews.
   b. Imagine that you have called the employer who placed the classified ad from Step 3.
   c. Using play (script) form, write the conversation which might take place. Your goal is to show both the employer and you, the applicant, asking probing questions and giving succinct explanations. You must understand the nature of the job, and the employer must find out your qualifications. Most of the information written in Step 4 should be presented "orally" in this step.
   d. The final lines of the script must indicate whether the employer decides to invite you for a personal interview and whether you accept.
   e. Put a proper heading on your paper and hand in on the due date.

7. Complete two worksheets on application forms.
These will be distributed and corrected in class.

8. Complete one sample application form.
These will be distributed and corrected in class. Re-write until you receive credit.

9. Participate in mock interviews.
Instructions will be distributed in class. Points will be given for the degree of constructive participation in small group work.

II. On the Job

10. Complete one worksheet on giving and taking telephone messages.
a. Listen carefully to instructions on how to leave a succinct message and how to record it.
b. Listen to the messages dictated by the teacher and record them on the worksheet distributed in class. This will be corrected in class.

11. Complete one worksheet on using the yellow pages.
This will be distributed and corrected in class.

12. Write one memo.
a. Listen carefully to the explanation of the importance of memo writing and study the sample provided.
b. On the form which will be distributed in class, write your name next to "FROM." You are a high school principal.
c. Read the rest of the information printed on the memo. You'll see that you're sending this to Maria Williams, Assistant Principal of Activities. Your memo concerns cancellation of the Senior Prom.
d. You must now draft the memo to Ms. Williams on this topic. Your memo must accomplish two things:
i. state the problem precisely
ii. request specific action by a certain date
You may give any reasons you wish for why you favor cancellation of the prom-- unauthorized senior ditch days, for example. Tell Ms. Williams what action she should take and by what date.
e. Re-write the memo until you receive credit.

13. Write one monologue justifying a position.
a. Listen carefully to the explanation of when this skill is important.
b. Choose one of the following business decisions.
i. termination of an employee due to mandatory retirement age
ii. temporary lay-off of newest employee
iii. decrease in salary to save employee's position
iv. transfer of employee to distant city
c. Assume that you are the Personnel Manager who must defend management's decision. The employee, who has received written notification of the decision, has made an appointment to argue with you that the decision is unfair. You are preparing for the appointment by practicing what you might say.

(cont'd.)

d. Your monologue must answer the following questions:
   i. What exactly is the decision? Re-phrase it.
   ii. What might be some of the employee's reasons for objecting to it?
   iii. What are your rebuttals to these reasons?
   iv. What alternatives does the company have? What are the consequences of those alternatives?
   v. What alternatives does the employee have? What are the consequences of those alternatives?
e. Re-write your monologue and practice for oral reading.